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POPULAR PARTICIPATION IN THE RECOVERY AND DEVELOPMENT PROCESS IN AFRICA

A Case Study of Kwale District Community Water Supply and Sanitation Project, Kenya

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INTRODUCTION

Africa is at present gripped in an economic crisis. One indicator of this crisis is the debt burden which has reached such proportions that many countries are unable to service let alone repay their debt. Another indicator of Africa's crisis is the declining export earnings as compared to the cost of imports. The high rate of population growth in many African countries only goes to compound the already grave situation.

Almost without exception therefore African Governments are faced with the difficult task of raising sufficient funds to finance development projects or sustain public services at the required level. The situation is such that no African Government can afford to tell its people to sit back and wait for the government to carry out all the required development projects or provide all the required services. The people themselves must be involved. In other words, for Africa to lay a firm foundation for its recovery the one resource which African countries have in abundance, i.e., the people, must be brought in, motivated and encouraged to play their full part in the development process.

Motivating the people and encouraging them to be development agents rather than consumers in the development process calls for innovation and a new vision on the part of leaders, development planners and decision-makers. It will also call for a clear perception of the social dynamics operating within the target communities. The key to success in achieving effective public participation is to make the people right from the beginning feel that the project in question is their project and not a project brought in from outside. The people must therefore be involved right from the beginning in identifying the community need and in designing the project to satisfy that need.

Kenya is one of the few countries in Africa where, through the Harambee movement, people's participation has taken root and has made a major contribution in the development process. There are in Kenya Harambee projects in almost all spheres of community life. There are Harambee schools built and managed by the people themselves. At one time, there were more pupils in Harambee schools than there were in public schools. There are Harambee health clinics, Harambee churches and roads built under Harambee effort. There are many Harambee water projects supplying large rural communities with domestic water. There are many agricultural projects including cattle dips, irrigation schemes built through Harambee effort.

Since independence the one lesson which leaders and planners have learned is that the Harambee projects which succeed are those which were conceived and planned with full participation of the community. In fact, in many cases government officials, donors or other specialists were brought in to provide special service only at the invitation of the people who were the initiators and implementators of their own project.

In response to this initiative by the people and in recognition of the important contribution to development made by the Harambee movement, the Government has not only given its full support but has also made it quite clear that it regards the Harambee movement as an essential element in the development process. Over the years, what has evolved is a situation of mutual co-operation between government and the people in planning, executing and managing many projects. As a rule, in this co-operation the community has identified their need and suggested a solution. The Government has then come in to provide expertise in planning and set the guidelines for execution and management. The community provides the labour and management for the completed project. Where, as in many cases, funds were required from a donor agency, this was channelled through the Government.

The introduction by the Kenya Government of the District Focus for the Rural Development Strategy in 1983 was a major and a positive move intended to bring decision-making and development planning closer to communities at the grass-roots level. The strategy emphasizes the need to plan for the people by involving them in the process right from the start.

A case study of Kwale District community water supply and sanitation project

The Kwale District community water supply and sanitation project (KWDP) was initiated in 1985 as part of the Kenya-Sweden rural water supply programme to be implemented by the Government of Kenya.

A. Programme objectives

The long-term programme development objectives were as follows:

- To assist rural communities (and in particular, women and children) throughout Kwale District with provision of clean and sufficient drinking water, adequate facilities for sewage disposal, hygiene education, and overall general improvement of public health;

- To establish a programme comprising integrated, well co-ordinated water supply, sanitation, community liaison, health education and training activities;

- To establish an effective District-based programme implementation team staffed entirely by nationals;

- To integrate programme activities into existing district and sub-district administrative structures, thus strengthening existing institutions;

- To promote and develop a wide range of skills both within the programme implementation team and the communities themselves.

B. Project objectives

The operational objectives of the KWDP, in support of the long-term programme objectives, are the following:

- Establishing a District-based administrative system mainly comprising an implementation team with core staff from Ministries of Water Development, Health, Culture and Social Services and Kenya Water for Health Organization (KWAHO), which is a non-governmental organization. The implementation team should capably respond to requests from organized communities for assistance in the co-ordination of point source water supplies. This objective will be achieved through emphasis on:

  . National staff in all implementing team positions, including key management posts;

  . Least possible involvement by external advisors in day-to-day management and supervisory matters;

  . Innovative management techniques and staff training opportunities;

  . The implementation team being allowed to develop at a rate reflecting its own accummulated experience rather than being overly dependent on expatriates.

- Establishing a District-administered system that capably responds to requests from institutions and families for technical assistance in connection with construction of improved latrines.

- Establishing a workable legal and financial framework in which rural communities can participate in the implementation and ongoing maintenance of their own point source water supplies and improved latrines.

- Assisting organized villages in Kwale District in construction and ongoing maintenance of their own simple point source water supplies, tentatively estimated at 440 serving a population of approximately 82,000.

- Completing the rehabilitation of four existing rural piped water schemes in Kwale District.

- Assisting organized villagers in Kwale District in the construction of 130 demonstration latrines (subsequently increased to 200).

- Promoting further construction of latrines by interested institutions and families, through health education, provision of squatting plates and possibly vent pipes with fly traps at cost, and as appropriate, either provision of technical assistance on request and/or sponsorship of training of primary health care trainers (PHTs), community development assistants (CDAs) and local artisans in construction techniques and directly related activities.

- Establishing a solid foundation on which the next phase of the programme (a careful expansion) will be based.

- Creating amongst government, non-government and donor agencies involved in the water supply/sanitation sector, an increased awareness of possible methodologies and approaches that may be applied in self-help rural development projects.

- Establishing a model rural water supply/sanitation project with activities that can be replicated in other areas of Kenya.

C. Project philosophy

The most important ingredients in the philosophy on which the project is based are:

(a) Limited area(s) of activity for main construction components (so as to facilitate community liaison, planning and supervision) activities, as well as cost control;

(b) Provision of assistance to organized communities that have expressed desire and shown commitment to participate in project activities;

(c) Community participation in project activities - planning and design to the greatest extent possible, financing, construction, maintenance and repair, and subsequently, project evaluation;

(d) Simple suitable technologies that allow for ongoing community-based maintenance and repair of point water source supplies and latrines to the greatest extent possible.

D. Project implementation

The Ministry of Water Development is the main implementing agency in partnership with the Ministries of Health, Culture and Social Services, Kenya Water for Health Organization (KWAHO), donor agencies mainly SIDA and the local communities.

KWAHO is a non-governmental organization which advocates the provision of safe water for the rural poor and health education to eradicate diseases. It functions on the premise that women are a latent force for change that the communities they represent can, through dialogue, find the solution to their own problems and can with institutional support, implement the measures advocated.

KWAHO also considers local community organization as best adopted for carrying out developmental work and that health and hygiene should be built upon the access to safe and clean water and follow, not precede its implementation. In accordance with these principles, among others, KWAHO spearheaded the move towards the provision of water for all through community mobilization and inter-agency collaboration.

The role of KWAHO in the project

The role of KWAHO in the project is to provide the link between the technology and the people. Previous efforts in hand-pump projects including the South Coast hand pump testing project, which was part of the global UNDP/World Bank Hand Pump Testing Programme, had failed. These projects had completely covered people's wells and installed hand pumps that could not be repaired when they broke down. People eventually had to dig new wells. At the beginning also, the Kwale project had focused primarily on technology, installation and development with technicians bestowing community participation on people. As became obvious later, the committees which were constituted by the water technicians were not based on an understanding of local social organization, were controlled by land owners and were not clear about their roles and responsibilities in project implementation. The problem of community participation emerged. The project management acknowledged this problem and commissioned a study. The study called for the project to bring in a new partner skilled in community organization for self-help water system. The work of KWAHO, which became that partner, motivated village women and men to organize themselves into water committees, raise money for maintenance of pumps and become trained in pump repairs. It provided that community involvement was not only possible but worthwhile.

The KWAHO approach to community participation

The method elaborated by KWAHO in its approach to community participation has the following general pattern (A. Kassam, 1989):

1. Identification and planning

(i) Initial contact with the locational authorities and communities and community elders to propose project preliminary discussions with the members of the community;

(ii) Social survey to gather information on community in project area;

(iii) Discussion of roles and responsibilities of the community, election of community leaders to be represented in the water committees, formation of water committees, registration of water committees with government ministries of culture and social services and water development;

(iv) Project siting team comprising of representatives from Ministries of Water Development, Health, Culture and Social Services. KWAHO mobilization staff and village committee, location of water point selected by community, discussion of land issues if any and agreements made, water committee signs agreement with the Ministry of Water Development;

(v) Follow up on discussions held and organization of committees to begin collecting funds and bank accounts opened, land agreement signed, trainees for future operation and maintenance of facilities identified.

2. Implementation and training

KWAHO staff assist ministries of water development and health staff in the:

(i) Mobilization of community work force to collect materials and provide labour;

(ii) On-site training for hand-pump caretakers;

(iii) Installation of water point by Ministry of Water Development and KWAHO trainees, where relevant;

(iv) Installation of VIP latrines by Ministry of Health with assistance of members of community;

(v) Training in health and hygiene, training in community administration (book-keeping, report writing, leadership);

(vi) Initiating a gradual hand-over process;

(vii) Formal hand-over of facilities to community.

3. Monitoring and evaluation

The progress made by the communities is monitored by the evaluation team. The team members also give moral support to the communities and undertake participatory evaluation with community members.

E. Project procedures

One of the main objectives which have strong bearing on project procedures is the need to develop a programme consisting of integrated well-co-ordinated water supply, sanitation, community involvement, health education and training activities. Logically, the strategy therefore is to integrate efforts from the various partners using water component as the entry point for the interventions since the rural population in Kwale District experience great hardship in water supply.

According to project procedures, after the preparation of the medium-term plan, the first step in implementation is to carry out a community analysis. At this stage, the project staff and other local-level partners collect data on the present situation as regards the water supply and sanitation. A public meeting (baraza) is convened to serve as a forum for both the members of the community and project staff.

Community mobilization

The KWAHO model for field operations is an innovative one which has been evolved based on modes of community organization associated with the concepts of self-help (Harambee, a Swahili term meaning literally 'to pull together' and cost-sharing) through which the people contribute towards development project by raising the required sum of money with the help of local and government leaders.

In response to President Kenyatta's independent call for Harambee, that is working together to build the nation, a lot of community development projects have been started. Harambee, as a concept, embodies ideas of mutual assistance, joint effort, mutual social responsibility and community self-reliance (Mbithi, et al, 1977). Accordingly, the participation of individuals in self-help projects is guided more by the principle of collective good than individual gain. KWAHO's approach to community mobilization is founded precisely on this principle of social solidarity. By using this essentially grass-root approach in its initial contact with the communities and by channelling its programme of assistance to the community using traditionally accepted methods of dialogue and action KWAHO has thus succeeded in reaching the people it is attempting to serve. It also ensures that the wishes of the people themselves are respected and also that they identify fully with the innovations being made for their own good.

F. Project achievements and impact

The Kwale expanded programme covers an area of 8,250 km^2 with a population of 46,750 people. The project has a total of 74 technical staff, 16 social staff, 5 health staff and 109 trained village pump caretakers. The new water installation include 146 boreholes with hand pumps, 23 spring captures, 17 rain water tanks, 1 dam and 96 demonstration latrines.

Evidence from evaluation activities reveal that besides building water systems and demonstration latrines, the project has had in the process of its implementation profound impact at the village, government, NGO and donor levels.

Effective and sustained utilization

At the village level, the economic and social impact of effective and sustained utilization is easy to discern. In areas where pumps have been installed and are being utilized, women consistently express relief and gratitude at not having to walk long distances to fetch water of questionable quality to the home.

Encouraged and supported by the approach of KWAHO extension workers women have utilized increased availability of time and water for horticulture. Water groups have increasingly branched off into a variety of economic activities including poultry keeping, processing of bika (red oxide) and production of khanga (cloth). This has, in turn, increased cash contributions towards pump maintenance and the probability of its long-term survival.

Despite problems in achieving complementarity of water and sanitation, uneven hygiene education related to water handling and use of water facilities, a dramatic decline in morbidity has been reported. Health statistics for Kwale District, based on out-patient clinic visits, show a clear and consistent decline in diarrhoea diseases "from 34,042 out-patient visits in 1984 to 19,420 in 1986. The cause of the decline in diarrhoea diseases is not known", (Annual Report Health Information System District Report, 1986 p.12).

Despite inconclusive causuality, the trend is clear. Statistics from Kuhaka Health Centre in the project area indicate a 50 per cent decline in diarrhoea and 71 per cent decline in skin diseases between 1985 and 1987.

Dynamic problem-solving capacity (sustainability)

At the village level, this has been instituted through the 135 user-created and user-supported water committees. These committees have become increasingly autonomous in functioning. They have elected leaders, collected local materials for construction, helped in pump installation, collected money for pump maintenance and have undertaken pump repairs. In brief, there are:

- 135 village water committees;
- all collect cash;
- all have women treasurers;
- families pay Ksh 1 to 10 per month;
- totals range from Ksh 200 to 13,000;
- 70 per cent have opened bank accounts;
- all pumps are functioning;
- committees have repaired pumps.

Both men and women have gained confidence in themselves and in each other. This is evidenced by increased respect for women and their acceptance in public decision-making. Young female extension workers are accepted and listened to with respect even by older men and women in a predominantly Moslem society. The importance of women as pump caretakers and on decision-making committees is appreciated and supported by communities. Groups have evolved their own rules and regulations to guide problem solving and conflict resolution. Decisions made by committees have been followed up by action. This includes locking up of pumps, allowing members to pay in kind, dropping ineffective committee members, denying access to non-paying members and penalizing households that do not carry out mutually agreed upon duties such as cleaning pump surroundings on an assigned day.

As groups have gained confidence and a sense of efficacy they have increasingly used extension workers as resources. This has included asking for additional information, training or guidance in involving particularly persistent problems. The interface between the water committees and project staff is the source of two-way information flow between project staff and people in communities.

At the agency level, working groups within each section meet regularly to monitor, evaluate and adjust strategies to ensure effectiveness. The highest committees, the project steering committees which include MOWD, KWAHO and donor representatives from Nairobi and the project management committee now include the KWAHO senior staff member. These committees also meet regularly and function to support project staff in problem solving. In order to ensure long-term sustainability, the project needs to move closer to and work within the regular MOWD mechanisms.

National staff and expanded programmes (replicability)

The project is managed by competent Kenyan staff and includes local people recruited from the Kwale region with occasional technical assistance. The project has expanded beyond the first experimental stages to cover an entire district.

Other impact

KWAHO's crucial role in operationalizing the community involvement approach and ability to work with government technicians has increased government and donor support for its involvement in water programmes. The Ministry of Water Development strongly supports KWAHO and has nominated KWAHO as the principle NGO with which it works. William Draper III, Administrator, UNDP and Barber Conable, Chief, IBRD, among other dignitaries have both personally visited the Kwale project. Subsequently, they have both emphasized the importance of involvement of communities and NGOs in water supply programmes of their own agencies.

In 1986, SIDA recognized KWAHO's involvement in the Kwale project as the single most positive development of the project that year. SIDA has applied the Kwale experiences to guiding its policy in other provinces in Kenya. KWAHO's services are now in demand by 15 donors. In 1987, KWAHO also won an international UNIFEM award in recognition of its work in Kwale.

Government and donor experience in working with a small national NGO has led to greater understanding of the problems of NGOs and a commitment to policy change in support to NGOs.

UNDP has taken the unusual step in pledging support for the institution-building of KWAHO, a step which is expected to be a precedent for other NGOs. PROWESS and UNIFEM have developed an innovative proposal for provision of 'core funds' on a declining basis over a three-year period. The proposal includes training in financial management and assistance in crystalizing policies to ensure that KWAHO consolidates as an institution (Deepa Narayan-Parker, 1988).

C. Conclusions and suggestions

Kwale was successful because it was allowed to be successful, it was allowed to change, to evolve and grow over an extended period of time. Even though sustainability and replicability cannot yet be assumed, the Kwale experience highlights processes and factors that are important in creating programmes that are sustainable and replicable. These include overall project design issues and specific project component issues.

Project design

Kwale succeeded because it achieved a partnership between agencies and because the programme was allowed to evolve and grow. Partnership was possible because of a shared conviction of the centrality of community involvement in project success. This was assisted by a focus on one shared overriding goal, achieving 'sustained functioning of community-owned water systems'. The project design played an important role in attaining partnership and in evolution and growth of the programme.

(a) Partnership

Kwale was able to achieve partnership between government and NGO, between a number of donor agencies and most importantly between the government and local communities. This partnership was based on mutual respect, shared decision-making, two-way information exchange, negotiations and defined responsibilities. No partner dictated to others what needed to be done. Each partner gave of their best.

(b) Evolution and growth

Evolution and growth was evidenced not only within the overall programme but within each project component. A hand-pump testing project became an integrated water supply and sanitation (WSS) project. A training of women in hand-pump maintenance became training of 'whoever was most available and committed' to repairing hand-pumps. This included men.

Within the programme, need for change was not viewed as a sign of failure. Change is inevitable in programmes whose success depends on achieving a 'fit' to people's needs. Change was based on learning from experience. Evolving effective strategies takes time. This time period can be decreased by conducting applied social and technical research prior to implementation. Constant monitoring of defined indicators is important. Once effective strategies have emerged, they must be increasingly routinized and institutionalized. Only then should programmes attempt to expand.

(c) Role of project design

In the early stages the project evolved and grew primarily because of the personalities of the individuals involved. In the later stages, the project continued to evolve primarily because of the direction provided by the project document. Personalities became secondary.

Sustainability and replicability cannot be achieved if the success of a project is completely dependent on individuals involved. Personalities cannot be replicated. Project documents, a manifestation of project design, can be replicated.

The Kwale experience highlights the total inappropriateness of the 'blueprint' approach, a framework which assumes that all is known and predictable before a project begins. The blueprint approach cannot be applied to projects which aim to plan, implement and evaluate together with local communities. Instead, what is needed for low-cost community-based integrated water supply and sanitation programmes is an alternative framework that:

- gives people and community management a central place;
- identifies an overriding shared goal, 'effective and social personnel;'
- integrates one overriding goal with supportive management and organizational tasks and functions;
- defines the manager's role as designer of a 'learning environment';
- makes two-way information flow a central management task; and facilitates inter-agency co-operation and collaboration.

(d) Integrated rural development

The Kwale project is yet a clear demonstration of how the various needs of the community can be meaningfully responded to through the use of the most pressing sector as the focal point. In this case, water for health formed the initial basis from which women's and community development have sprung to increase and reinforce literacy and adult education, income generation, agricultural, environmental and other development activities. The people of Kwale narrate with confidence how their economic and social welfare has improved in recent years.

This and other projects in the country have gone a long way towards creating the confidence needed by government, NGOs and communities that development is possible in spite of the intervening difficult economic circumstances.

Even as the Government announced measures of cost-sharing in such areas as health, education, etc., communities such as Kwale are already used to putting up their own contribution voluntarily for their own benefit. They already know that this is what accelerates the achievement of their development goals.

Mobilization for popular participation

Having recognized the importance of popular participation in the recovery and development in Africa, there is need to address the process of mobilizing people's participation. The Kwale experience shows that it will not happen

automatically. While left to themselves, grass-roots communities have always evolved basic survival mechanisms, most communities have welcomed new ideas that are not disruptive to their social organization, value systems and within their means. Approaches by outsiders have therefore to be carefully considered if they are to attract community responsiveness.

(a) Traditionally government officials have been trained to deliver and issue directives, to provide and assume leadership. The idea of training officials for motivating the people and generating community initiative is fairly new. Even as we debate the merits of popular participation, a whole generation of government officials are still being trained and oriented towards the top-down approach and relationship so common between governments and communities.

The need then arises to retrain to re-orientate government officials, donor representatives and NGO field workers so that they can begin to appreciate, respect and encourage the people's initiative. For popular participation to succeed, the developmental agents must see themselves more as motivators and facilitators rather than initiators or service donors. This is especially important where it concerns the identification and initiation of a project. Unless the people regard a project as their project right from its initial stages, popular participation will be at best half-hearted and in many cases the project will be doomed right from the start.

(b) The value of community effort is entrenched in most non-industrial societies. So when at independence Kenyatta's leadership came up with the national motto "Harambee" it was reaching out for and harnessing that driving force deep down in the community. Also when at the same time Kenyatta told the people "hakuna cha bure" - do not expect anything for free - he at once dealt a fatal blow to the top-down philosophy and at the same time galvanized the people's will and energy to start self-help projects and co-operatives. The few who could go it alone did while the majority found that by coming together and forming 'Harambee' groups they were able to achieve more than they would even have done individually.

(c) In those areas where for various reasons the community appears to lack the drive or motivation necessary for initiating community projects it will be necessary for the Government or NGOs to use innovative strategies for motivation. One effective way of doing this is by giving people the opportunity to visit areas with successful community projects and see for themselves and exchange ideas with those involved. Inter-group and inter-regional visits facilitate exchange of experiences and enrichment in knowledge beyong the capacity of any one individual mobilizer. In this regard, Kenya offers a wide variety of successful community projects of which the people involved are very proud and from which others can gain motivation.

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LEADERSHIP TRAINING FOR RURAL PEOPLE

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1. CURRENT EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM

Education in Mali falls into three main categories: traditional, non-formal and formal. This chapter will deal mainly with the last two categories, without belittling the first category which has an important function in our still traditional societies. In fact, traditional education plays a primary role, especially in the rural areas, where it backs up but also sometimes clashes with the education system referred to as modern.

1.1 Formal education

This form of education was inherited from the formal education system of France which established the first schools in the former colony, now known as Mali. According to UNESCO (1981), "the colonial heritage" was characterized by:

- Low rate of school attendance: very selective and, therefore, undemocratic education, reserved for a minority of children. In 1960, primary school enrolment was only 7 per cent;

- Unsuitability both in terms of content and objectives. The aim of colonial education was to provide the colonial government with junior officers, who were devoted, heart and soul, to the mother country and to the service of an extroverted economy. Technical and advanced training were neglected. At the time of independence, Mali had only three veterinary doctors, about a dozen professors, between eight to ten medical doctors and three pharmacists.

Faced with such a situation and in order to meet the pressing needs associated with real political and economic independence, the leaders of the new nation undertook a reform in 1962, based on democratic and socialist principles: social justice, equal opportunity of access to education for nationals and cultural disalienation of citizens, who should be able to relate to their environment.

To attain these objectives, the 1962 reform was aimed at:

1. Both mass education and quality education;

2. A type of education which could produce, with the maximum economy in time and money, all the personnel that the country required to implement its the various development plans (Perthe, 1980, p.10).

The education system was therefore reorganized accordingly and special emphasis placed on basic education, suited to the requirements for harmonious socio-economic development, in other words, a form of education which takes account of both cultural and technological factors.

1.1.1 Elementary education

This covers a period of nine years, divided into two stages (cycles): the primary school (premier cycle) lasting six years and the middle school (second cycle) lasting three years. The primary school serves as preparation for the middle school and is aimed particularly at integration in the labour market. For this reason, considerable efforts have been made to ruralize it. The middle school, at the end of which a certificate is awarded, guides the pupils either towards general secondary education or towards various levels of technical and vocational training and the other sectors of economic activity.

The principal objective of elementary education is to "inculcate" in the children the fundamental knowledge indispensable to the exercise by each citizen of his/her essential economic and civic responsibilities (UNESCO, 1980, p.29).

What results are expected from elementary education today?

The maximum rate of school attendance is 25 per cent, which is far below the 50 per cent threshold considered to be necessary for laying a solid basis for economic and social development and still substantially short of the 100 per cent rate set in Addis Ababa in 1961 as target for the 1970s (Etats généraux de l'éducation, 1989) (National Conference on Education, 1989).

The causes of such a situation are numerous and derive mainly from the lack of budgetary resources (although Mali devotes about one-third of the national budget to education), the quality of education, the curricula which are not always suitable and low output (high dropout rate of about 40 per cent, most of whom become illiterate eventually).

According to Berthe (1981), out of every 1,000 pupils in the first stage of elementary school, 223 are sent out during the first year, 693 or 69.3 per cent drop out before the fifth year, 225 go as far as the sixth year and only 6 per cent manage to complete the cycle without repeating any classes.

The figures are alarming and led to two alternatives being put into effect since the beginning of the 1980s: ruralization and use of local vernaculars in some schools on an experimental basis.

However, these programmes come up against technical, methodological and sociological problems due to poor planning and organization of ruralization activities, which many perceive to be a waste of time because they do not have any real bearing on classroom instruction and are based on the quantity of production. Although the use of local languages in the classroom in the formal system has proved to be beneficial, it has not been possible to generalize it. This is because most people, particularly the educated elite, still regard these languages as second rate and prefer to use French.

In their legislation, after having painted a gloomy picture of elementary education, the Etats généraux de l'éducation in 1989, recommended several measures aimed at raising the enrolment rate, improving the quality of curricula and adapting them to the socio-economic needs of the country. It was observed that:

The promotion of schooling as a factor of development, depended on the mobilization of the entire nation to integrate education in its priority programmes and accord it the same importance as desertification control, opening up of land-locked countries and the attainment of food self-sufficiency (p.43).

1.1.2 Secondary education

Secondary education lasts three years and can either be in the form of general secondary education or technical and vocational training.

General secondary education prepares students for university education while the technical and vocational training produces graduates with various technical skills for the labour market.

The secondary schools encounter numerous problems, including under-equipment, lack of teaching materials, libraries and classrooms, imbalance between the literary and science subjects, very expensive scholarships and inadequate instructor training. For their part, the technical and vocational schools face severe difficulties in each of the specialized fields.

1.1.3 Higher education

Institutions of higher education (Advanced Teacher Training Colleges) train senior teaching service staff for government service, law, economics, health, rural development activities, etc.

In its report on education in Mali in 1981, UNESCO states that the uncontrolled increase in enrolment is a major problem facing higher education. This results in the production of a much larger number of graduates than is needed (particularly in the literary disciplines), a severe lack of qualified permanent teachers, shortages of classroom accommodation, equipment and other resources (UNESCO, 1981, p.71).

1.2 Non-formal education

This is defined in Mali as training given as a supplement to basic education. This type of education is provided through structures such as the Centres d'animation rural (CAR) (the Rural Leadership Training Centres), the Centres à orientation pratique (COP), (the Practical Guidance Centres), the Community Development Centres (CDCs) and the Literacy Centres (CAS).

1.2.1 The Centres d'animation rurale, the Centres à orientation pratique and the Centres de développement communautaire

The CARs are the product of the merger in 1966 between the rural civic services and the seasonal school, and provide two years of practical agricultural training to rural youth. There are about 50 such schools in the various administrative regions of Mali.

The COPs, which are fewer, are attached to the CARs and are geared towards young elementary school leavers (primary level) who are unable to continue their studies. The COPs are practically non-existent today. The CARs, on the other hand, admit about 20 trainees every two years in each centre. Five centres admit both male and female trainees and have drawn up special programmes for women accompanying their spouses.

Each Centre is administered by a Head of the Centre, his/her assistant, a military official and a matron (for the mixed centres). The training begins with a three-month military training, followed by rural activities:

- Cultivation of some 20 hectares of land using modern techniques of ploughing, fertilization, insect control, crop rotation, etc.;

- Husbandry of animals used for traction and/or for food;

- Maintenance and management of equipment; and

- For women: hygiene, nutrition, child care, dyeing, etc.;

- Literacy courses.

The produce of the farming activities contribute towards the upkeep of the trainees.

The activities of the CARs have grown considerably but the number of trainees is still low (1,000 trainees every two years at the beginning of the 1980s) and the costs of training are relatively high.

One of the interesting aspects of this type of training is the possibility for the products of CARs to obtain a complete set of ploughing equipment which they have to pay for within three years. This arrangement has been made possible through assistance from European countries. However, repayment is not always easy.

For their part, the CDCs have one objective: the training of community development technicians responsible for organizing and assisting the grassroots to be more effective in the solution of their immediate problems. These technicians, together with government representatives, technical departments and leadership cells, form a community development action committee, whose task is to:

- Raise awareness of, initiate and organize community activities;

- Gradually make the people assume their responsibilities;

- Prepare and conduct training courses for leaders;

- Plan, co-ordinate and assess community development activities;

- Mobilize local resources.

1.2.2 Literacy education

Literacy campaigns have been organized in Mali since independence and a wealth of experience accummulated over a long period of time. A first attempt was made from 1959 to 1965 to teach the French language, using the staff and the teaching methods and equipment of the formal education system. This ended in failure.

From 1965 onwards, a new approach was adopted and the concept of functional literacy was more fully defined. Literacy programmes would be in the local languages, which meant conducting extensive linguistic research, because unlike the British and the Belgian colonialists, the French never made use of the local languages in the education system. Everything had to be started from scratch in this country which had 10 main languages, not forgetting the numerous dialects of these languages.

The Experimental World Literacy Programme (EWLP), together with UNESCO, selected Mali as the location for its 1968 to 1972 pilot project and four languages were used to provide literacy training to some 70,000 producers in 2,000 centres.

The results of this project were very encouraging in terms of the interest shown in it by the peasant population. To keep the newly literate people informed, a rural newspaper written in a local language was launched in March 1972. The current circulation of this newspaper is 125,000 copies.

1.2.2 Structural framework and organization

Since 1975, an institution of the Ministry of Education, the Direction nationale de l'alphabétization fonctionnelle et de la linguistique appliquée (DNAFLA) (the National Directorate for Functional Literacy and Applied Linguistics) has been responsible for literacy and post-literacy training of adults in Mali. Although DNAFLA trains adults in the urban areas, it operates mostly in the rural areas where it should be recalled, 80 per cent of the Malian population live.

The function of the DNAFLA is to conduct linguistic research, produce teaching material and train field instructors. It has a little over 100 people and staff at various centres in the regions. The number of staff varies from region to region and they work either for the Regional Education

Departments (DREs) or the Rural Development Operations (ODRs). The staff is trained by DNAFLA, together with staff of the non-governmental organizations (NGOs).

DNAFLA monitors and evaluates the activities of literacy centres and the training of local instructors through its national and regional staff.

It is a government institution which co-operates with all the other institutions responsible for organizing activities for rural people through national co-operation, rural development, international NGO and other projects.

1.2.2.2 Costs, current situation and problems

Literacy programmes are financed from various sources:

- The people themselves construct the Centre and its facilities and also cater for the literacy organizer, who is most often paid in kind (cereals, work on his farm, etc.);

- The State grants an operating budget which, though modest, provides the basic minimum;

- The ODRs are most often financed from external sources;

- The international organizations and NGOs also make substantial financial contributions.

For example, in 1977, in the region covered by the Opération arachide, 70 per cent of the cost of literacy programmes was financed by external sources, 20 per cent from the Malian budget and 10 per cent by the people themselves (UNESCO, 1981).

Such dependence on external assistance is a very worrying prospects for the future of literacy programmes. Although these programmes are very successful in terms of quality, the same cannot be said in quantitative terms.

Figures for the 1988 and 1989 campaigns are as follows:

Villages covered	3 673
Number of centres	6 293
Number of male organizers	6 088
Number of female organizers	468
Number of male students	62 858
Number of female students	9 007
Number of functionally literate	
Men	14 848
Women	593

Source: DNAFLA.

As can be seen, the figures are low, even if they are for two literacy campaigns only and the percentage of female participants is almost derisory. It should be noted that Mali has a population of about 8 million of whom 51 per cent are women and more than 40 per cent under 15 years of age. Such a situation has several causes ranging from lack of financial resources, poverty of rural people as well as the unsuitability of some programmes and lack of personnel to organize village communities.

It is in consideration of all these problems that the literacy centres have for a decade now been seeking new strategies for training rural people at low cost, strategies which would make it possible to introduce in the communities a new profile of functional literacy and of rural leadership that genuinely promotes development and makes for training of the rest of the community.

This new type of trainer will be considered in the next chapter on the basis of two projects started in 1980 and 1988:

- Advanced training of the functionally literate;

- The training of development trainers (an original experiment in the Sahel).

II. FUNCTIONAL LITERACY AND POPULAR PARTICIPATION

2.1 Advanced training of the functionally literate

The 1970s were characterized by the mobilization of rural populations for literacy programmes. The campaigns which were successfully conducted generated new needs which led to the peasantry asking what they could do with their newly acquired ability to read and write.

As a matter of urgency, adequate plans should be made to address the needs of functionally literate people to acquire technological, scientific, legal, organizational and other expertise. The fact is that the efforts made in post-literacy training activities have been insufficient to cope with demand.

The idea is to provide the kind of training that could best enable the functionally literate to cope with an environment rapidly changing in natural and socio-cultural terms.

This is the real and fundamental dilemma to be addressed through constant research and experimentation in providing advanced training to the functionally literate.

The researchers, teachers, sociologists and linguists working on the project were first to admit that their aim as Malian researchers in the national literacy drive was to try and contribute towards the solution of the development problems of their country. Accordingly, they were bent on finding a training system that was appropriate to the rural world and its needs.

For five years, they had travelled the countryside and worked with the rural people so that they could some day secure a better future. Their report on that experience should be the beginning of a debate that they hoped would be as wide-ranging as possible among development experts. Their hope was to provide development practicians with the concrete and relevant information that they could use in their routine and individual daily assignments (LA FSHA, 1982).

2.1.1 Objectives

The general objectives were three in number:

- To train illiterate people scientifically and not merely by rote;

- To explain the causes of occurences and allow for their verification, so as to prepare local people better to be able to solve agricultural, animal husbandry, health, technological, management and other problems;

- To verify the sociological assumption that traditional associations "leavened" through literacy and functional literacy training programmes can become proper channels for testing and propagating essential innovations for development.

The specific objectives are applicable to such training areas as:

- Agropastoralism: To rehabilitate impoverished soils and better utilize animal production systems to enhance productivity and improve the use of land resources.

- Health: To involve the whole village in the solving of health problems and in the control of major diseases, making them to undertake primary health care schemes and to pay attention to hygiene and sanitation.

- Technology: To acquire the necessary technical skills for environmental control and development.

- Economic and civic life: To acquaint the village with its rights and obligations in terms of civil status, the country's political life, the role and calculation of taxes, credits and marketing.

2.1.2 Socio-pedagogical principles

In order to achieve these objectives, seven principles were identified:

- Training in the village for the village. Such training should be oriented not towards the training of individuals but of the whole village as a group. The training themes are therefore chosen bearing in mind the major problems of the village. Particular attention is accordingly given to self-examination carried out in the village assembly to determine the training content and the expectations of the village. In this way, the whole village feels involved.

- Training all young people in the village even if such training will initially involve only the functionally literate who will thereafter spread the new knowledge. Here, the traditional youth associations play the role of training structures.

- Linking education with action, training with transformation. This principle is important and hence it is essential to integrate the training project into the overall transformation project. The trainers do not therefore just embark on lone adventures. They ensure that the training scheme has a field of application.

- Training by first taking into account the previous knowledge of trainees before imparting new data. Care is taken to overcome the superiority complex for which literate people are notorious and to make them accept that although traditional society may have no writing, it is not without knowledge. Such knowledge is not only practical but also scientific. It is therefore, necessary to involve the old people in the training of the young.

- The training should be science- and experiment-based. There has always been the tendency to underestimate the ability of rural people to understand and their legitimate desire to know not only the why but also the wherefore. Thus, emphasis should be given to the scientific explanation of soil chemical constituents and micro-organisms, photosynthesis, the onchocercisis transmission cycle, graphs showing infant weight progression, the use of microscopes and experiments.

- Linking scientific training to general training.

- Training should not be full-time at a stretch but alternating. This would allow for a link between school and environment and between training and production.

2.1.3. Training

This should be conducted in three phases:

- Before the training programme. The village is selected by such criteria as presence of functionally literate people, village consent and interest in a specific training area. A team, therefore, visits the village in order to evaluate the needs of the people and to set the date for their training.

- During the training programme: The team which is multi-disciplinary, including teachers, sociologists, linguists and training specialists, informs the village assembly of the training methods and objectives. An initial social evening is organized during which the village lists its needs by order of priority, the themes being identified; and the night is devoted to the gathering of traditional knowledge on a chosen theme.

Such traditional knowledge is analyzed at the literacy centre where the trainers and the functionally literate prepare data sheets on the theme.

A second social evening is organized during which the functionally literate read out the new things learnt to the assembly and the second theme is discussed likewise.

Though this recitation, the trainers are able to evaluate the level of knowledge acquired by the functionally literate as well as to employ a more appropriate method of transmitting knowledge to the people, that is, through the functionally literate.

At the end of the training period, the functionally literate people are given specific assignments.

- After the training period

These assignments are many: reading and analysis of the data sheets, keeping of the civil status records, sensitizing the people on such various problems as sanitation and nivaquin treatment.

Functionally literate people are assisted in these activities by rural development supervisors. After a certain number of training programmes, the training team prepares post-literacy pamphlets from the project data sheets for distribution in the centres.

2.1.4 Assessment and conclusions

Following an assessment of experimentation with this methodology, it has been possible to proceed to the next stage which is mainly that of training local and regional trainers.

A pedagogical assessment showed that the methodology was accepted both by the people and the technical services. The training met the needs of the people, enabling them to fully participate in the scheme. It led to concrete actions and its multidisciplinary nature opened up vistas of new techniques and stimulated a new form of co-operation and involvement in the rural environment.

The sociological assessment showed the wealth of traditional knowledge recorded, analyzed and written out. The impact of the training has been visible especially in such agricultural areas as manuring, seed treatment, agricultural technology and farming techniques and in such health areas as nivaquin treatment and village pharmacy industry. It is necessary to note the impact of such training on the improvement of communal organization.

In conclusion, it can be said that with this methodology, it is possible to give to the village a minimum of education, with the functionally literate people playing an essential role in the transformation and improvement of living conditions in the village.

Such training is organized by and for the village community which, as already seen, chooses and defines its training needs, using its own human resources to secure greater use of new knowledge and their genuine commitment to the process of change. Participation is voluntary and total and this explains the method's success.

2.2 Training of development trainers

This new programme is designed for people in the Sahel zone in Mali, a zone seriously affected by desertification and drought. It is also mainly meant for women, for benefiting from it as mothers would reduce the problems of educating children.

The project entitled "Literacy for women and young ladies in the Sahel zone" also concerns the male population and was meant to avoid creating disharmony in the communities. It was financed by UNICEF and executed by DNAFLA in co-operation with all the field partners/communities, technical services, and NGOs.

2.2.1 Objectives

The project has two main objectives:

- To experiment a literacy programme for women and young ladies integrated into development activities and structures aimed at protecting the mother and child.

- To ensure multiplier effects and durability over time for this project through a decentralized system involving local structures and popular participation.

2.2.2 Strategy

The strategy centres around the following:

- Progressive establishment;

- Integration of literacy schemes into promotional activities (socio-economic and socio-sanitary);

- Empowerment of local authorities for programme planning, execution, follow-up and evaluation;

- Gradual take-over of the programme management by the local people and organizations;

- Integration of literacy schemes into already existing development projects in order to ensure their continuity and financial and material support.

2.2.3 Activities

These cover the following four areas:

- Public education, which is carried out at the pre-literacy stage but continues during the campaign period with a view to greater mobilization of people.

- The training is organized at two levels for participants, over a three-year period - six months each year. It is aimed at enabling them to face the various problems encountered by their community.

- Training for the group leaders who are also re-oriented each year and whom we will be discussing in detail.

- Follow-up and evaluation - the first being decentralized at the national, indeed local level and the second at national level. Both activities allow for the necessary re-orientations which, in line with the people's responses, aim at a greater satisfaction of grass-root needs.

- Production of teaching material through workshops involving trainers and technicians at the national and regional levels. The material is designed bearing in mind the needs expressed by the people themselves as well as the opportunities offered by the development projects involving them.

2.2.4 Training of trainers

Given the wide experience of training trainers for the grass-roots training programmes, the programme has devised a new approach which has yielded positive results over the two-year period of the project.

The project planners, eager to move beyond the conventional type of literacy programme leader meant to transform him into a true trainer of rural people and a veritable development worker who, by his origin, involvement and stability, belongs to the community in which he works.

The following training construct was designed to provide the group leader/trainer with the means of achieving set objectives.

- Identification and recruitment

Both activities were carried out by the people themselves in co-operation with regional trainers. The selection criteria include the preparedness of the individual, his commitment and recognition of his social value by the community, his stability (especially in relation to women because married women often have to leave the village and because the men also drift from the rural areas), an awareness and broad-mindedness regarding the community's development problems and, lastly, schooling in a formal education system, whether European or Islamic. This last criteria is essential, for it makes the individual's training easy since he would have already gone through the

mechanisms of learning, reading and writing. Experience has shown that if a complete illiterate is recruited, the sheer effort of acquiring writing skills becomes a hindrance. It is usually not easy to find people, especially women, with such qualities in villages, and the result is that men have been recruited for women who do not however see any harm in that provided that "the trainer is from their community".

- Training and re-orientation

During the first year, an initial three-week intensive literacy course is provided to trainers in their native languages to enable them to acquire reading, writing and agricultural skills.

In the second year, the trainers are retrained for a longer period that varies with post-literacy activities and trained to post-literacy Level I. At this level, training is given in such fields as agriculture, animal husbandry, health and environment.

In the third year, the trainers receive more specialized training, after which they are sufficiently equipped to solve the community's immediate problems. It should be noted that the training of the general participants does not wait until after the three-year period of trainer training. Their training starts immediately after each stage of the trainer training which lasts for a shorter period (three to six months) as it is intensive, while that for the general participants ranges from four to six months.

Moreover, trainers are assisted by literacy teachers and such specialists as farm counsellors, agronomists, veterinary scientists, doctors, midwives and co-operative managers. Trainers are grouped by their vernaculars during the training period and this enables them to share their individual experiences with their colleagues.

Their assignment is not limited to teaching at the literacy centres; they are also in charge of supervising the daily activities of their own general trainees and the rest of the community. Thus, they are responsible for controlling the practical application of theoretical knowledge in such areas as market gardening, solar pump, maintenance and book-keepingin for the co-operatives. They are also to ensure that their trainees maintain their literacy levels during the other six months of the year because of the observed tendency for trainees to go partly illiterate during the planting and harvesting seasons.

2.2.5 Prospects

The project is still very young but its evaluation after two years of existence raised great hopes, showing the people's enthusiasm and participation, the success of the literacy scheme and the integration of training into development activities. The existence of problems should, however, be recognized in terms of providing constant pedagogical and technical guidance, the empowerment of local structures, the exercise of skills and the transfer of responsibility.

2.3 Towards total popular participation

The exercise of skills and the transfer of responsibility are the indispensable conditions for genuine and wholehearted popular participation. In both the areas that we have just seen, the major and common goal is to secure autonomy for grass-roots people to take complete control of their financial, material and human development.

For a long time, attempts have been made to establish development projects by imposing techniques and technologies on the so-called beneficiaries of such projects. There have been many failures and the lessons learnt indicate that only such action and makes the individual the major actor in the process of change or evolution should be pursued.

Effective participation is what determines the pace of change. Such participation requires information and training, awareness and acceptance of change, the will to act and react and determination to change and develop. And this can be achieved only through the acquisition of skills, through the possibility of exercising them and by being accepted as responsible.

This individual belongs to a community that has put faith in him by allowing him to be trained. In return, he owes his community the duty of informing and training it.

The question is how much knowledge he is allowed to acquire?

Enough to enable him operate without jeopardizing the power and authority of the one who trained him. This individual, who unconsciously or consciously censures him will filter through the transfer of knowledge in order to keep his own privileges.

Literacy class leaders have had the bitter experience of spreading too much information, thereby, inciting people to revolt, to discuss the quality and price of cotton, to keep better account of their production and, perhaps, even to challenge forestry levies and other taxes.

However, a process is already in motion and grass-roots people are becoming increasingly aware of the need for training to enable them to better understand and manage their rapidly changing environment, to make the best choices and to take the best decisions for their future.

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UNITED NATIONS
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INTRODUCTION

Nigeria is located on the west coast of Africa. It is surrounded by the Niger and Chad in the north, Cameroon in the east, Benin in the west and by the Atlantic ocean in the south. The country is divided into 21 states for administrative purposes and has three major tribes with their languages and is largely a multi-ethnic country. There are three main types of vegetation which are rain forest, savannah grassland and semi-desert scrub. The rain forest is found mainly in the southern part of the country which include the following states: Akwa-Ibom, Anambra, Bendel, Cross River, Imo, Lagos, Ogun, Ondo, Oyo and Rivers; the savannah grassland covers the middle belt areas of Benue, Kwara Benue, Plateau, Niger and Gongola, while the northern parts - Sokoto, Katzina, Kano and parts of Gongola and Borno states - are in the Sahel area (semi-arid).

The climate is generally tropical with two main seasons: the rainy season and the dry season. The rainy season starts in April and lasts until August and the dry season starts from September to March. Although in the coastal areas, rains begin earlier than April and continue into October and beyond.

Talking about crops and mineral, Nigeria is a predominantly agrarian society and is blessed with many agricultural products, the major ones being cocoa, oilpalm, palm kernel, groundnut, cotton, benniseed, beans, bananas, yams, rice, cassava, rubber and palm oil. Most of these crops are consumed locally either as food, feed or used as industrial raw materials while a few of them like cotton, cocoa, rubber and groundnut are exported.

The main minerals include tin, coal, and oil.

Although the English language is the official medium of expression, the country has about 250 ethnic groups, the two most being Hausa/Fulani, Ibo and Yoruba. Each of these tribes has a long history of cultural and economic traditions which are very diverse and fascinating.

political history

Politically Nigeria operated on ethnic groupings which were organized and governed on the basis of the principles of kingship, laity, and age. But later, these developed in many different directions. Some remained communal democracies while others became kingdoms, emirates and empires. Though these various communities operated different forms of government they constantly traded, exchanged visits and inter-married among themselves.

Britain formally colonized Lagos in 1861 and it was later able to extend and strengthen its earlier contacts with the coastal communities of the south into a vast colonial territory which is now called Nigeria. This ruling lasted for 100 years.

By 1914 the separate administrations which the British had set up over the southern and northern sections of Nigeria were united. Hence a single political authority came into existence to exercise political power in the country.

During these years and the post independence era, the people were made to depend more on foreign goods by encouragement of importation of goods to local manufacturing and which is partly responsible for the dependence syndrome.

This process of economic dependence still continues in the country today, this is because the system developed by the colonialists which ensured the continuation of this economic dependence still remains. Such institutions or systems include the educational system, the judicial system, the civil service, the police, the military and other institutions.

Although Nigeria is no longer under British rule, there is still a dominant capitalist culture and influence in the country. This is why we have with us today a class distinction between the working class people and the wealthy ones, and the political instability which the country has been experiencing.

Policy goals since after independence

Nigeria's policy goals which aim at improving the social well-being of its people started with its second National Development Plan (1970-1974). The declared objective was an egalitarian society where every citizen has equal opportunities in the country. This has been clearly stated by the Nigerian Government as follows:

"A just and egalitarian society puts a premium on reducing inequalities in inter-personal incomes and ensuring balanced development among the various communities in the different geographical areas in the country. It organizes its economic institutions in such a way that there is no oppression based on class, social status, ethnic group or place. Distributive equity is therefore an important cornerstone in the set of national objectives for the government programme of reconstruction and reform. The ultimate goal of economic development is the welfare of the individual. The focus of our policy objectives should therefore, be on how the ordinary citizen is to be affected by the resulting set of action programmes and projects. The prospect of the citizen in the process of economic development and social change should not be determined by the mere accident of the circumstances of his birth. He should be able to have equal access to all the facilities and the opportunities which could help him realize his potential and develop his opportunity fully. A sense of self reliance and a sense of national pride are worthy objectives which the government believes the average Nigerian wishes to cultivate. But he can only do so in an atmosphere of expanding opportunities, for all employment, for education, and self-fulfillment. The nation will, therefore, remain fully committed to the achievement of these objectives at all times". (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 1970).

From the foregoing, it is obvious that the Government means well and shows the concern it has for the people. The Government tried to improve the lot of the people but the events of 1970 and the 1980s do not really show that any greater attempts have been made than ever before in the development of the nation. The outcome of this period was a general growth in GNP from about 210 (i.e. Naira 230) per inhabitant in 1975 to about 420 (Naira 508) by 1979 (Cole 1981, World Bank, 1983).

However, in the "Guidelines for the fourth National Development Plan 1981-1985", the Nigerian Government admitted that it has failed in the implementation of its earlier-stated egalitarian objectives. Consequently, while reaffirming its commitment once again to the same goal, it boldly itemized some concrete areas of concern, thus:

"In the past there was a tendency to measure economic performance in terms of such aggregates as the gross domestic product (GDP), capital formation, and in terms of financial expenditures incurred in the implementation of plan projects. Though it may be easy and convenient to do so, it is clear that such indices do not tell the whole story. The common man is more interested in such things as the availability of drinking water, housing units, medical facilities, educational facilities, good roads, life expectancy, calories intake, etc. From this point of view, it may be significant to know how far these facilities have improved during the plan period as such information provides a good criterion for measuring development". (Federal Ministry of National Planning, 1981).

The outcome of this plan did not meet the desired needs of the populace. The structure of Nigeria's economy has been described as "a sorry economy which suffers from fundamental structural contradiction. It is an economy endowed with spectacular mineral wealth, but could not provide enough agricultural products for its domestic consumption and industrial needs. It is an economy which strives desperately hard to provide basic infrastructure only to create more urgent demands in other sectors. Finally, it is an economy with an official inflation rate of over 15 per cent which somehow fails to encourage massive private investment." (Federal Ministry of Industries, 1982).

Policy implementation method

To achieve the set objectives, the country concentrated on promoting the economy through importing highly advanced Euro-American, modern technologies and use of their models, which has failed to yield the intended effects. The country has witnessed high unemployment, migration of the rural people to the urban areas, high poverty rate among 80 per cent of the total populace and development of high taste for imported goods. The nation's economy changed from dependence on agriculture to that of mining, commerce and construction. Facilities provided in the cities are often over-stretched because of the rapid growth of the cities. This has shifted the country from the productive sector to the services sector.

It may be pertinent to ask this question: What are the factors responsible for the non-achievement of the objectives in the development plans of Nigeria? Why, despite all the amount of road construction, building of schools, industries, provision of electricity and some other infrastructures, the majority of the people have not been touched by this apparent affluence and social changes accompanying the gigantic development and growth programmes of the nation since the past three or more decades of development planning?

In preferring answers to this question, Arua (1985) observed that the concept *of the nation is not very clear* to a great majority of the population. To these people, it is a matter of myself, my people or tribe and my community. In this context, then, development efforts at the rural level and the attendant technological changes should be people-oriented.

From the political economic structure of Nigeria, it can be seen clearly that development planning had been adopted as a way of its economic development.

It was pointed out that all the efforts made at the modernization of the rural communities have failed to yield the desired results because most of the efforts had been based on transferring highly advanced Euro-American modern technologies and development models to Nigeria. By so doing it was thought that the local villages would quickly develop which resulted in the development differential between the village and the city. As of today, it has so far brought disastrous consequences. The gap has increased instead of narrowing. The populace have been paupetized, their living conditions have fallen below acceptable standards leading to virtual abandonment or neglect of agriculture, the only occupation the people know best. In short, the so-called modernization theory advanced by both our Euro-American and indigenous experts has failed to do the magic claimed for it. Again, another question could be posed.

What could be the cause of these failures in our country when these have had stories of successes in their native countries of Europe and America? The reasons are not farfetched. Arua (1985) submitted that the failure has been mainly due to the fact that these strategies were alien to the people's traditional and cultural values. He observed that the organizational structures and administrative set up in implementing the strategies resulted in failure and the recipient populace were worse off for it. He further explained that in implementing these strategies and models of development based on the modernization theory, the experts ignored the fact that these strategies and models originated under very different circumstances and for the benefit of very different kinds of circumstances which are (Hyden, 1976) quite distinct from those of the recipient countries. Another major reason advanced is that the people who were supposedly being helped to develop were not involved and the help was just thrust on them by experts from 'above' or from external donor rural development agencies. No attempts were made to understand the people and their ways of functioning. It reaffirmed the fact that viable solutions to many rural development problems can only come from the people themselves (COPAR, 1978). In other words, in embarking on any rural development projects, the local people should be involved from the onset. They should be involved in articulating existing patterns of self-help, in voicing organizational and developmental problems, in working out solutions to such problems, and in implementing the new participatively designed solutions or measures of aid (Seibel and Damachi, 1982). This process of participatory rural development will mean development from below and from within the people with the external agencies giving a helping hand.

Recent Nigerian Government policy has now viewed rural development not only as a social technical but also as an economic process. This is because rural economic development is focused on human welfare - on family well being, nutrition, public health, community involvement information geared towards improving the quality of life generally.

The goals of rural development from this human perspective are summarized as:

(a) The satisfaction of elementary basic needs of food, shelter, clothing and health;

(b) Improving life style and quality of life of the 60 per cent rural population through quantitative and qualitative changes;

(c) Establishment of social justice through a humanely acceptable distribution of goods and services;

(d) Freeing the individual from the uncertainties of nature through education essential for self-actualization;

(e) Breaking through the marginality of rural masses through full active participation in all the activities and at all levels of command research, planning and implementation (FAO, 1973). These goals of rural development stress the need for total and effective mobilization as in the pre-capitalist mode of production of all available human (male and female) and natural resources to ensure that the task is effectively carried out.

The focus in rural development on developing techniques and economic infrastructures - access roads, credit and such inputs as tractors, plough, fertilizers, improved seeds, insecticides designed to increase per capita output, and market orientation among the rural population - lead to a different set of goals of rural development. These can be summarized as:

(a) Increase in per capita output and market orientation among the rural population;

(b) Increased food production commensurate with the rapid population growth;

(c) Ensuring equitable redistribution of aggregate income;

(d) Reduction in regional inequalities in per capita income;

(e) Reduction of the rate of rural-urban migration;

(f) Gaining a precise and scientific understanding of the social and ecological environment in which rural changes is to occur.

Avoola and Idachaba (1989) observed that the discernible trend in development economics is the gradual movement away from growth and other non-poverty oriented performance criteria towards the people, particularly rural people, as the focal point of any development strategy. The universal approach is to launch a massive attack on rural poverty, which will also benefit the urban economy in the long run. Basically, rural infrastructural build-up is construed as the primary requirement of the rural people to manifest their full economic potential. Hence the rural infrastructure strategy is only a subset of the

overall rural development strategy, which in turn is an integral part of the general economic development strategy of a country.

The general notion underlying the rural infrastructure strategy is that it is difficult for the rural sector to contribute significantly to economic progress in the absence of basic facilities that also enhance their living standards.

The observed emphasis on agriculture is based on the universal fact that life in rural regions is based mostly on agriculture, which explains the initial concentration of efforts on those infrastructures which facilitate agricultural processes directly albeit not exclusively. The presence of substantial externalities, chain effects, spill-over effects and linkage effects among rural activities ensure that the general focus on agriculture will also benefit other aspects of rural life in due course. Ayoola and Idachaba (1989) noted that these infrastructure items are essentially a public obligation owing to five reasons. First, the lumpiness of expenditure required is generally beyond the reach of ordinary individuals; second, there is the presence of free rider problem which discourages private individuals; third, infrastructural facilities are durable stocks of capital which require regular maintenance costs and hence life long inter-generational consequences; finally, the provision of infrastructures cuts across different ministries and disciplines which are under the control of government.

Integrated rural development was conceptualized and a deliberate programme in this regard was mounted in the form of farm settlement scheme. The rural infrastructural components of the scheme include physical (rural roads, rural housing, markets, etc), social (primary school, health care, etc.), and institutional (farmers co-operatives, co-operative tailoring societies, etc.) Farm settlements exist to date in many states of the federation, but merely now consist of ill maintained and inaccessible buildings and other structures with few or no settlers. In practical terms they have petered out from human memories as a component of the integrated rural development policy (Ayoola and Idachaba, 1989).

Another stage in rural infrastructure programming consists of the collaborative efforts of federal and state governments to establish, in series, a number of integrated agricultural development projects (ADPs) under the funding assistance of the World Bank.

Local participation

It was observed that the satisfaction of rural infrastructure requirements does not rest on supply management only; it also depends on effective demand management. The latter presumes that generation and articulation of demand for public services through local participation is quite important (Ayoola and Idachaba, 1989). For rural infrastructures, the particular aspect of local involvement that is of immense importance is maintenance. Strong co-operation of the local organizations have an important role to play in the area of maintenance management. Some experiences under the ADPs show that representative local bodies can minimize waste and handle maintenance work. They can also minimize the amount of benefit of rural infrastructure services accruing to the

privileged group. Some of the questions are: How can the commitment of local people be mobilized and local participation be secured and strengthened? In what ways can local community-based programmes be incorporated into the rural infrastructure strategy?

Awoola and Idachaba (1989) made the following specific recommendations to provide guidelines for effective rural infrastructure strategy:

(a) The sponsors of rural infrastructure projects must maintain a close link between planned and actual fund allocations and other aspects that determine their enduring commitment over the entire project's life;

(b) There should be built-in stabilizers in the rural infrastructure strategy to limit the adverse effects of perturbations arising from frequent organizational and personnel changes on the implementation performance of projects;

(c) The rural infrastructure strategy requires provisions for contemporaneous operational research and planning studies to perfect the various technical processes involved in the implementation of projects; some of the processes that are presently inefficiently carried out are infrastructure budgeting, costing, screening and evaluation, as well as tendering, direct labour utilization, cost control, monitoring and supervision;

(d) Appropriate responsibility sharing formula must be found to allocate resources among the different tiers of government in the infrastructure development process;

(e) Efforts should be intensified to involve the local people in the infrastructure development process, including provision of assistance to the target groups towards instilling confidence in them to utilize the autonomous forces within the individual and the group for ensuring their co-operation in the execution and maintenance of the facilities.

Present government policy

As stated earlier, the major factor which influences the rural development process is the government policy. This is because it is the government that determines the amount of public funds to be allocated to the rural sector, the way and manner in which rural resources will be harnessed and utilized and the groups in society which are likely to benefit from development process.

Other factors as stated by many scholars are the failure to take cognizance of the socio-cultural and traditional value of the populace, and lastly the organizational structures and administrative set up in implementing the strategies. The failure to involve the people who are to be helped in the planning process or to try to understand the ways these people function are also crucial. It is clear to the Government that the only way to recovery and development of the nation is to adopt the participatory process; that is, development from below and from within the people with both the Government and external agencies giving a guiding hand.

In taking cognizance of these facts, recent government policy has focus on promoting people's participation in recovery and development. What do we mean by this development?

Development has been seen as the process by which man increases or maximizes his control and use of the material resources with which nature has endowed him and his environment (Afigbo, 1988). In general, therefore, development is seen as consisting of five main ingredients:

(i) Increasing material wealth for the use of individuals and the whole nation (income and economic development);

(ii) Eliminating unemployment;

(iii) Eliminating poverty and want;

(iv) Eliminating inequality;

(v) Increasing the general availability of labour-saving devices, hence the modern emphasis on technology and technological growth (Afigbo, 1988).

Development, therefore, is not only the manipulation of the physical universe and the laws that control it but also the manipulation of the mind of man through formal and informal education. Development also means a movement that involves everybody and everything in a society.

To promote people's participation in the recovery and development of the nation, the Nigerian Government has embarked on a number of projects in the past three years which actually encourage people's participation. Some of these programmes are as follows:

Government policy and agricultural economy

Government involvement in agriculture is an effective way of promoting people's participation in the recovery and development of the nation. Since agriculture has been widely recognized as the major source of Nigeria's economic survival, it has played and continued to play an important role in the economy of the country until the era of oil boom in 1970 during which farm labour was deserted for the brighter prospects in the expanded construction, commercial and services sector of the economy which, however, did not last. Not only does agriculture form the major core of our economy, it also touches the lives of many Nigerians in the rural areas. This is because more than 70-80 per cent of the Nigerian populace resides in rural areas and farms the land. Unfortunately, this situation eventually phased out and the country had gone through a lot of changes in its economic status.

Within the periods of 1970-1985, agriculture fell from the leading sector in the economy to a neglected one as is evidenced by the following facts:

1. The sector's contributory share of the GDP (at 1977/1978 constant factor cost) declined from about 58 per cent in 1965 to 48 per cent in 1970; 18 per cent in 1980 and about 9 per cent in 1985 as shown in Table 1.

2. Between 1970 and 1985, food production in Nigeria grew at an average annual rate of about 2 per cent while the demand grew at an average annual rate of about 3.5 per cent, hence resulting in increasing food supply deficit. The result of this is a high rate of increase in food imports, which on the average, was about 26 per cent per annum between 1971 and 1980 as against an average decline of about 3.25 per cent per annum between 1960 and 1970. Food imports increased from Naira 88.3 million in 1971 to a high of Naira 1.82 billion in 1981. It has subsequently declined to Naira 966.1 million in 1985 (see table 2). Secondly, there is a high rate of growth in food prices.

3. The total share of agricultural commodities in the total value of all exports from Nigeria declined from an average of about 74 per cent in the 1960-1965 period to about 4 per cent in the 1976-1980 period and about 2 per cent in 1985 (see table 3).

4. The country's dependence on raw materials imports increased as a result of low production.

5. Problems of unemployment increased in this sector as it cannot absorb all manpower trained by the policy programmes.

The changes in the agricultural economy of the nation are due to some problems facing the sector. Some of these problems are both natural and man-made. Some result from the natural phenomenon while some are due to government policies and programmes. Some of these problems include:

(i) A precipitous decline in agricultural productivity since the oil boom era of the 1970s during which virile farm labour deserted the farms for brighter prospects in the expanded construction, commercial and services sectors of the economy;

(ii) An excessive emphasis by policy makers on a mere increase of the land area under cultivation rather than on an increase in farm productivity;

(iii) An insufficiency of other non-labour farm inputs such as improved seeds and livestock, fertilizers, etc;

(iv) A lack of supporting physical infrastructure such as feeder roads, storage and marketing facilities and adequate water supply for the areas of production.

To arrest the decline in agricultural productivity, inadequate food supplies, loss of livestock and other related problems, various programmes have been implemented to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of agricultural research and agricultural production. These two requirements have been addressed by both the science and technology policy (launched in 1987) and the agricultural policy for Nigeria (launched in 1988).

New policy and programme initiatives (1985 to date)

The role of government (in agricultural development), the state of the economy and the political environment or atmosphere which dictates the continuity or stability of policies and programmes are very important factors in agricultural development.

In addition, a clear sense of direction and well-articulated policy objectives upon which government projects and programmes of actions are based is very essential. For this reason, the Federal Ministry of Agriculture, Water, Resources and Rural Development recently prepared a document entitled "Agricultural policy for Nigeria".

The approach enables the people concerned to actually participate in the plan. It involved farmers and other private sector operators engaged in agricultural production and related activities. It also gives room to flexibility to accommodate changing situations and circumstances as against rigidity.

The Government is also determined to monitor and evaluate the implementation of the programmes, and projects arising from the policy measures will be vigorously pursued on a continuous basis in order to correct deviations from laid down guidelines as soon as they are discovered.

Some of the major decisions taken to boost the agricultural sector include:

(i) Provision of inputs and machine spare parts and other forms of assistance to small-scale farmers in particular and the generality of the farmers through the reduction of import duty on agricultural equipment to the minimum level;

(ii) Liberalization of the loan scheme for small-scale farmers through which they can obtain loans of up to Naira 5,000 without collateral.

(iii) The establishment of the Directorate of Food, Roads and Rural Infrastructure specifically mandated to put additional resources into the promotion and development of rural infrastructure, particularly roads and rural water supplies.

With these new government policies, there is hope that agricultural sector of the economy will:

(i) Provide adequate food for our increasing population;

(ii) Supply adequate raw materials for a growing industrial sector;

(iii) Constitute a major source of employment;

(iv) Serve as a major source of foreign exchange earnings; and

(v) Offer a market for the products of the industrial sector.

In this way, the impact will be felt both at the national and grass-roots level.

The Directorate for Foods, Roads and Rural Infrastructure

Yet another government programme in promoting people's participation is the creation of the Directorate for Foods, Roads and Rural Infrastructure (DFRRI) by the Federal Government in 1986. The major objective of the programme is to open up the rural areas by feeder roads. This, it is hoped, will subsequently help to open the rural areas up for the social and health services such as good clean water, education, light and decent accommodation, increased and improved agricultural inputs and easy evacuation of farm produce for increased income. The expectation of these services is to discourage the present rural-urban drift.

DFRRI roads are being constructed nationwide to link villages and farm lands to wider markets. For the riverine areas, government is dredging the access creeks to enable large boats and barges to move people, supplies and heavy equipment for use in the provision of social amenities. The Government is also providing motorized boats to convey people to schools, health centres and to the urban centres for the marketing of rural products and the purchase of supplies needed in the rural communities.

With this programme, the Nigerian Government encourages the participation of rural dwellers in the development of different sectors of the economy.

Introduction of People's Bank

The People's Bank Programme - was established on 1 October 1989 to serve the urban and rural poor only. It is an attempt by the Government to ease the hardship faced by traders and artisans engaged in small enterprises who may not have the necessary requirement to obtain credit facilities in conventional commercial houses.

Under this scheme, artisans and petty traders - bricklayers, vulcanizers, foodstuff dealers, carpenters, etc. - would benefit from unsecured loans of between Naira 50 and Naira 2,000 with only 5 per cent interest. The only major requirement is for the would-be beneficiary to register with an association recognized by the Bank. Since its inception, it has given out Naira 500,000 as loans to 580 persons and has so far opened nine branches and thirty-six centres in seven states of the Federation. Hopefully, more branches of the Bank would be opened in other parts of the country.

The National Directorate of Employment

The Government of Nigeria, in the attempt to promote people's participation in recovery and development, introduced the National Directorate of Employment (NDE) scheme to serve as a catalyst in creation of employment opportunities. The programme areas of focus are on:

(a) The reactivation of public works;

(b) Promotion of direct labour;

(c) Promotion of self-employment;

(d) Organization of artisans into co-operatives and the encouragement of a culture of maintenance and repairs.

By this programme, the Government has been able to provide apprenticeships for crafts and skills based on traditional crafts using local improved products. Provisions are made available to learn activities like catering, fashion design, carpentry, etc., which have led to the operation of small-scale industries in the country. These small-scale industries are growing rapidly and many products such as keyholders, flower vases, flowers, earrings, caps, bottle openers, clothing and various snacks are available in the markets.

Another key programme of the NDE is the graduate farmer programme. In this programme a total of 6,555 unemployed graduates have been given agricultural loans to go into commercial farming. This has resulted in massive job creation.

Various jobs:

- Farm jobs for farm lands all-year-round;
- Seasonal jobs at an average rate of three farm hands per hectare;
- Good numbers of school leavers undergoing training in agro-techniques nationwide in resettlement centres;
- Lastly, another large number of school leavers have each been resettled in 2 hectares of farmland with loan packages. These employ an average of nine farm hands for year round operations.

Thus, the graduate farmer programme has not only increased agricultural production but has also provided additional opportunities in the agricultural sector of the Nigerian economy.

The National Economic Reconstruction Fund (NERF)

The National Economic Reconstruction Fund is another programme established by the Government to mobilize financial resources that would enable small and medium eligible industrial and allied enterprises to have access to medium-/long-term (five to ten years) loan facilities. This will help them to acquire their fixed assets such as machinery and equipment. But for this new arrangement, the small- and medium scale indigenous manufacturing and agro-related projects may not likely get credit facilities to purchase equipment at attractive conditions. This is because where these enterprises are required to source their machinery and equipment from outside Nigeria, they have had problems obtaining the requisite foreign exchange even when they are willing to pay exorbitant prices or where they were able to mobilize the local currency equivalent of the desired foreign exchange.

Since small-scale (and also medium-scale) industrial enterprises provide the engine of growth for any economy and create more jobs per unit of investment

than large-scale ones, introduction of the scheme would not only go a long way in the recovery of economy but also make possible further investment and financial flow into the country. Such a financial flow mechanism would importantly complement government's other current assistance programmes to small- and medium scale enterprises. On the whole this scheme encourages competition and dynamism in the rise of small and medium-scale real production enterprises.

Contribution of women's organizations to the improvement of the socio-economic situation of women in Nigeria

Many organizations have made efforts to correct the imbalance resulting from the marginalization of women in the development process. Principal among them are a variety of women's organizations which include governmental, non-governmental, philanthropic, professional, voluntary and religious associations, as well as social clubs. Notable among these organizations/association are:

(i) Women in Development (WID);

(ii) The National Council of Women Societies (NCWS);

(iii) The Women in Nigeria (WIN);

(iv) Nigerian Association of Media Women, etc.;

(v) Joint Armed Forces and Police Officers' Wives associations, e.g., Nigerian Air Force Officers' Wives Association; Police Officers' Wives Association; Nigerian Army Officers' Wives Association, etc.;

(vi) Philantropic and Voluntary associations, e.g., Soroptomists, Zonta, Girl Guides Associations; and

(vii) Religious associations, e.g., Federation of Muslim Women's Association of Nigeria (FOMWAN) and the Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA).

These associations/organizations have a common goal and similar objectives. They have adopted various imaginative ways of achieving these objectives aimed at different women groups as the target audience.

Women in Development (WID) is essentially a governmental outfit and operates through national, State and, in some cases, local government chapters, provides inter-disciplinary and multi-sectional machinery for the acceleration of the achievement of equal opportunity for women and their full integration into the development process.

The National Council of Women Societies (NCWS) has a membership of not less than one million women registered with 15 women's organizations all over the country and is strictly a non-governmental organization which promotes the welfare and progress (economic and social) of women, laying special emphasis on education and training

The Women in Nigeria (WIN), established in 1982 and with a membership some of 450 women and men, engages in research, policy making, dissemination of information and action aimed at improving the condition of women. Specifically, among others, it aims at combating disciplinary and sexist practices in the family and in the work place.

Programmes/projects/activities of women's organizations in Nigeria

Studies of the needs of women have shown that strategies designed to enhance female participation in development must address three broad areas, namely:

(a) Reproductive role and health care;

(b) Economic role, including education, skills training and technology development; and

(c) Entrepreneurship and co-operative development, including access to credit and technical assistance.

Therefore, most of the programmes/projects, etc., of the women's organizations are geared towards improving the situation in these areas and creating political awareness in them. These programmes take the form of:

(a) Educational projects;

(b) Agricultural projects;

(c) Health projects and environmental protection projects;

(d) Science and technology projects;

(e) Cottage industries;

(f) Banking and finance schemes; and

(g) Social welfare programmes.

Some of the above will briefly be discussed.

Educational projects/programmes

The educational programmes, etc., undertaken, range from enlightenment lectures/campaigns, seminars, workshops on co-operatives, leadership training, exhibitions, etc., to functional education programmes where training in skills acquisition such as sewing, baking, batiking, soap making, tie and dye, etc., are provided in women's educational/vocational centres. They include family life education and literacy classes.

Agricultural programmes

Activities under this programme include:

(a) Assisting women farmers to obtain land, improved biological inputs, fertilizer, etc. Recently, bags of fertilizers were distributed to women farmer groups all over the country through the ELF efforts;

(b) Assisting women's groups to obtain agricultural low interest loans from the banks and agricultural loans boards;

(c) Establishment of co-operative farms and livestock projects;

(d) Training in improved food storage and processing and assisting women's co-operatives to acquire locally fabricated crop/food processing machines;

(e) Manufacturing of farm implements by women's co-operatives;

(f) Provision of infrastructures such as access road, water through liaison with the Directorate of Foods, Roads and Rural Infrastructures; and

(g) Research into peasant agriculture in the 1984/85 period by MIN.

Science and technology programmes

In the field of science and technology, efforts have been directed towards providing household and industrial labour-saving devices and training in improved crop production methods, storage and processing, using simple locally fabricated machines and tools.

Specifically:

(a) Through the efforts of NCWS, water pots made with clay and fixed plastic taps have been produced to assist women in water storage while providing potable water;

(b) Local scientific ways of making salt and black soap have been developed in some states;

(c) Research has been carried out on mass production of palm oil and palm kernel, and into the conversion of shea butter into cooking oil and butter; and

(d) Fabrication of simple locally made crop/food processing machines by Nigerian institutes, private companies for use by women, e.g., gari processing machines.

Cottage industries

Considering that one of the major problems of women is the lack of disposable income for themselves and their children thereby making income-generating activities of high priority to them, many of the women's organizations, particularly the BLP, have assisted in cash and/or kind in establishing a number of agro-allied and cottage industries.

These industries include:

(a) Food/crop processing industry, e.g., gari processing, oil palm processing, groundnut processing, soybean milk production, bakery, fish smoking, rice milling and gin distilling;

(b) Cultural industries, e.g., basket weaving, adire/batik production, mat making, local textile production, e.g., aso-oke, aso-oke, etc., and pottery/ceramics; and

(c) Cosmetics/fashion industry, e.g., soap making, sewing, knitting, garment production, etc.

In addition, and more importantly, market outlets are being created and/or sought for the products of these industries through local government, state and national exhibitions.

Entrepreneurship including banking and financing

Women are being encouraged to form co-operatives so that they can become credit-worthy and thereby obtain loans for undertaking their projects. Women constitute about 10 per cent of all co-operative members in Nigeria. Although precise data by gender is not available, evidence suggests that the percentage and type of co-operatives varies from state to state. For example, in Oyo State in 1982, women formed about 40 per cent of membership for credit and thrift societies, but only 10 per cent of primary societies. In Kwara State, women are about 22 per cent of co-operative farmers (Busede Iyo-pello, 1988). In Ondo State, there are over 688 co-operatives and very many more in Anambra State. All BLP committees have organized rural women into co-operatives to enhance their credit-worthiness and increase their income generating activities.

Summary of recommendations

It is pertinent to mention some specific areas of need and recommendations to redress the situation with the imbalance in the number of women vis-a-vis men involved in the nation's development:

(1) The Government should increase the number of scholarships to women, particularly women with demonstrated aptitude in the fields of science, technology and mathematics;

(2) More places should be reserved for girls in schools, particularly in those states of the federation where co-educational institutions have been abolished;

(3) The course content of adult and non-formal education programmes must be relevant to the needs of women not only to enable them to read and write but also to provide them with income-generating skills;

(4) In addition to the existing home economics extension services, the Government should establish special agricultural extension services for women. These should emphasize the new farming systems and technologies such as the use of modern farm implements, improved high yielding and disease-resistant crop varieties;

(5) Arrangements should be made to provide increased access to credit in order to enable women to participate effectively in the formal sector of the economy as professionals, business women and industrialists, the recent launching of the People's Bank notwithstanding;

(6) Although there are quite a few women in top management and lower management positions in the public and private sectors, there is still the need for increasing their numbers, especially those in line positions to implement government policies at all levels.

"Better life for rural women" project

It is now widely recognized that overall national development in Nigeria is largely dependent on improving the productivity and efficiency of the rural sector. This is because between 70 and 80 per cent of the Nigerian populace live and work in the rural areas. Hence rural development, therefore, is not only the most effective way of improving the living standards of the majority of the population, it is also a basic condition for meaningful industrialization. In Nigeria at present, the economic position depends so much on agriculture which is the main occupation of families in the rural areas.

It is for this reason that the "better life" programme was established by the Nigerian first lady, Mrs. Mariam Babangida in September 1987. The main objective of the programme is to improve the lot of the rural women who were hitherto perceived as backward, uncivilized, wretched and therefore incapable of making meaningful contributions. Secondly, it is aimed at assisting the rural women to contribute their quota to national development.

From the outcome of this programme so far the Nigerian women have demonstrated their potential, resourcefulness, unity of purpose and organizational ability and are a potent vehicle for the positive transformation of the rural areas.

Objectives of the scheme

The objectives of the "better life" programme are to stimulate and awaken the consciousness of women who live in the rural areas to the realities of today and to articulate them into active participation in the development projects for improvements of their lot and that of the nation at large.

Main activities of the programme

The major factor behind the success of this programme so far is the idea of involving the people in their own development. In all the programme activities, the people were involved from the planning stage to the implementation period. Activities were based on promoting the use of their natural resources to improve their traditional activities. Briefly, some of these activities include:

Farming

Generally, the primary activity of most rural communities is farming. The goal of farming enterprise or activity in rural areas is basically that of meeting the needs of the rural families at minimum expenditure of physical energy in such a manner as to minimize drudgery of labour. Apart from this, the programme has been able to intervene on behalf of rural women in respect of:

(i) Acquisition of farmland: through its efforts, women, as individuals or in groups, are allocated substantial portions of land for farming;

(ii) Distribution of improved high-yielding and disease-resistant crop varieties (e.g., seeds, seedlings and cuttings for maize, citrus and cassava);

(iii) Bulk purchase and distribution of fertilizers to women farmers: in 1988, several thousand tons were distributed by the "better life" programme throughout the country. In 1989, the tonnage and number of beneficiaries were further increased;

(iv) Formation of co-operatives to process and market agricultural products.

Income-generating activities

Nigerian women are known for their hard work and self-development efforts. They engage in activities such as soap making, pottery, weaving, garri processing, palm oil processing, melon shelling, sewing and so on.

Through the "better life" programme, appropriate technologies were introduced to increase their production and minimize their energy exertion. Locally fabricated equipment was developed through research work and involvement of local fabricators to minimize the cost of such equipment. In addition, the wives of the military governors in all the 21 states have assisted these women to purchase this equipment, which they re-pay as their production and profits increase.

Formation of co-operatives

In the past, rural people have relied on farming co-operatives to execute big projects. Such projects include building of houses, roads, or crop farming. This traditional way of operation was modified to the type of movement that is better organized and registered with the relevant authority for proper

functioning. This is become the most important pre-condition for effective mobilization of production resources and accelerated rural progress.

Co-operatives are a suitable organizational framework for accelerated rural development and are useful instruments for the mobilization and sensitization of women. Women all over the country embraced the idea of co-operative formation because they realized its importance in increasing their credit worthiness and placing them in a position of strength to support income generating activities out of their pooled resources.

Political education and women's involvement. The National Directorate of Social Mobilization and Economic Recovery (MAMSER), under its political education programme, has been trying to make women to be politically aware, socially conscious and politically organized into popular organizations for the defence of democratic rights and social justice.

Under the political transition programme, women have equal opportunity to actively participate in both the electoral and political process and are eligible to contest for the highest office in the land.

In conclusion, the "better life" programme has been an eye opener in the promotion of people's participation in the recovery and development of this nation.

Training of rural women in productive work skills

The VAPP/ILO/FAMRD home economics project on training of rural women in productive work skills is funded with grants from both the United Nations Development Programme and the Federal Government through the Federal Department of Agriculture and Rural Development of the Federal Ministry of Agriculture, Water Resources and Rural Development. The project is designed to reinforce the ongoing activities of the Home Economics and Community Development Division through the establishment of a skills training unit. The executing agency of the project is the International Labour Organization (ILO).

Objectives

Established in June 1987, the Skills Training Unit trains rural women in the production of processed farm products, semi-agricultural products and craft items, using appropriate technology and resources. The goal of the training is to achieve steady and increased productivity with a view to generating rendial income for the rural women in particular, and the rural populace in general.

Activities

The Unit achieves its objectives through the following activities:

1. Identifying specific categories of groups of women who need assistance;

2. Providing feasibility studies for planned economic activities;

3. Assisting women in the formation of co-operative groups;

4. Providing credit facilities for implementing their activities;

5. Installing appropriate local technology at identified viable project sites in the zones;

6. Monitoring and testing the efficacy of low-cost technology introduced to women;

7. Providing communication support;

8. Monitoring and evaluating projects;

9. Organizing group study tours within the country to acquaint rural women's groups with ongoing projects benefiting from the Skills Training Unit;

10. Organizing group study tours to other countries to visit similar women's projects;

11. Organizing exchange visits of rural women leaders to Africa/Asia.

Training

On-the-job training in three categories of identified skills is offered by the Unit to its women's groups:

1. Food processing, preservation and storage

   (i) palm oil processing

   (ii) palm kernel oil processing

   (iii) cassava processing: fufu and gari

   (iv) fish-smoking

   (v) grain milling and dehusking (maize)

   (vi) rice processing

   (vii) cowpea and maize storage.

2. Craft production

   (i) weaving

   (ii) pottery

   (iii) tie and dye

(iv) pomade and soap making

(v) knitting and sewing

3. Administrative and management skills

(a) Training extension workers:

(i) in the preparation of feasibility studies, and

(ii) in the monitoring and evaluation of projects.

(b) Training of rural women:

(i) in the formation of co-operatives;

(ii) on how credit schemes operate; and

(iii) in basic business management skills.

Recommendations to National Government

1. As a matter of urgency, all the governments in the country, federal state and local should adopt agricultural production as the major development programme in the country.

2. Development efforts at the rural level and the attendant technological changes should be people oriented. This is to make the objectives of the development plans to be realizable as the strategies that were used in the past were alien to the people's traditional and cultural values.

3. In embarking on any rural development projects, the local people should be involved from the planning stage of such project to the end. The beneficiaries should be involved in articulating solutions to problems and in implementing the new participatory rural development. This will mean development from below and from within the people.

4. Efforts should be intensified to involve the beneficiaries of a project in the infrastructural process especially in instilling confidence in themselves either as a group or as individuals in utilizing the forces they possess in ensuring their co-operation in the execution and maintenance of the facilities.

5. Rural economic development must be focused on human welfare or the people's well-being through the provision of adequate rural infrastructure such as road, potable drinking water, shelter, markets, schools, hospitals etc. The Government, acting through its agencies, should provide these infrastructure items since they are mainly a public obligation.

6. The sponsors of rural infrastructure projects should maintain a close link between planned and actual fund allocations and other aspects that directly affect their enduring commitment over the project's duration.

7. The Government should increase budgetary allocation for all agencies that are involved in rural development and creation of employment opportunities especially in the rural areas and discourage the migration of rural people from the rural areas to the urban ones.

8. As more than 70-80 per cent of the Nigerian populace are engaged in agriculture directly or indirectly, government should further support agriculture through increasing its support for existing agricultural institutions in order to enhance people's income and encourage them to participate actively in the recovery and development process.

9. The Government should actively support all programmes that seek to enhance the status of women especially in the areas of income-generating activities by actively mobilizing them into groups or co-operatives and promoting their products through opening of outlets for marketing.

10. The Government should make the process of forming the rural people into co-operatives and of obtaining credit facilities easier by putting in place necessary legislation for the realization of same.

11. As most of the people, especially the rural people, have been marginalized by the implementation of the structural adjustment programme (SAP), the Government should strengthen existing credit facilities established for the small- and medium-scale industries and enact or amend existing legislation for commercial banks to extend a percentage of their loan scheme to the development of small-scale industries located in the areas in order to allow more of the people to participate in the recovery and development process.

Recommendations to the United Nations

1. The United Nations should direct its financial agencies, that is the IMF, the World Bank, etc., to increase its allocation for rural development projects especially those that have a multiplier effect on the lives of the rural people. In this regard, more funds should be made available to people oriented projects and programmes such as the National Economic Reconstruction Fund (NERFUND), the "Better life for rural women" programme and the People's Bank of Nigeria.

2. The United Nations should direct its agencies especially those that are involved in rural development to allocate more of their resources, financial and material for the building of adequate and relevant rural infrastructures.

Conclusion

It is only pertinent to say here, perhaps for the sake of emphasis, that programmes designed for people's participation in recovery and development should not only focus on the development of the people, but should involve them from the planning to the execution and implementation phases. Such programmes have to put the people's social and cultural variations into consideration and be people oriented rather than based on mere economic growth indicators. In addition, the development process should start with what the people know how to do best. In this way, the government should provide the necessary infrastructural and support facilities to enable the majority of the people to participate in the recovery and development of their country.

Table 1: Share of agriculture in gross domestic product - 1985

Year	All sectors (N million)	Agricultural sector (N million)	Percentage share of agriculture
1965	2,594.4	1,476.4	56.92
1966	3,119.9	1,691.6	54.49
1967	3,374.8	1,855.0	54.97
1968	2,751.6	1,415.2	55.50
1969	3,656.2	1,915.2	52.38
1970	4,519.3	1,711.3	48.23
1971	5,261.1	2,570.3	48.47
1972	6,650.9	3,033.3	45.60
1973	7,187.5	3,095.1	43.03
1974	12,116.9	3,345.1	27.66
1975	15,462.8	3,944.0	25.95
1976	19,437.7	4,579.5	23.56
1977	23,876.0	7,295.3	30.56
1978	26,258.5	5,143.4	19.59
1979	27,370.2	5,389.1	19.69
1980	31,434.7	5,656.8	18.00
1981	46,915.4	9,863.1	21.42
1982	40,370.4	10,419.3	25.11
1983	45,772.0	12,158.0	26.01
1984	25,855.0	6,651.0	25.90
1985	26,159.0	6,348.0	24.10

Source: CBN, Annual Report and Statement of Accounts (various issues).

Table 2: Share of food in total import value: 1971-1985

Year	Total import (N million)	Food import (N million)	Percentage share of food
1971	1,069.1	88.3	8.2
1972	990.8	95.8	9.7
1973	1,241.1	128.0	10.3
1974	1,717.3	154.8	9.0
1975	3,7 1.5	297.9	8.0
1976	5,148.5	440.9	8.6
1977	7,693.7	1.4	10.4
1978	8,217.1	1,070.7	13.1
1979	6,169.2	952.4	15.4
1980	6,217.1	1,049.0	16.8
1981	12,692.5	1,7 0.2	14.1
1982	10,100.2	1,642.2	16.3
1983	8,107.5	1,176.7	13.3
1984	7,178.3	1,052.1	14.7
1985	7,932.9	685.1	8.6

Source: Central Bank of Nigeria, Economic and Financial Review (various issues).

Table 3: Share of agriculture in total export of major commodities 1965-1985

Year	Total export (₦ million)	Agricultural export (₦ million)	Share of agriculture as % of total
1965	536.6	327.4	61.01
1966	568.2	292.6	51.50
1967	540.0	264.6	49.00
1968	467.0	269.7	57.75
1969	683.0	278.3	40.73
1970	885.0	386.8	43.38
1971	1,280.8	265.5	20.73
1972	1,404.7	190.2	13.54
1973	2,278.4	288.7	12.67
1974	5,791.8	307.7	5.31
1975	4,922.5	256.5	5.21
1976	6,751.7	261.5	3.87
1977	7,636.7	437.7	5.73
1978	6,064.4	444.2	7.32
1979	10,836.8	198.5	1.66
1980	12,687.4	434.5	3.40
1981	11,011.1	281.9	2.60
1982	9,196.9	203.4	2.20
1983	7,502.5	259.0	3.40
1984*	9,088.0	206.6	2.30
1985*	11,214.8	258.8	2.10

*Provisional

Source: CBN, Annual Report and Statement of Accounts (various issues).

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